

**MOU Signed between ITPO and a German Multinational Comany**

2355. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MOU has been signed between the ITPO and a German multinational company for holding fairs at Pragati Maidan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any objection has been raised against the MOU being in flagrance of the rules of the Ministry; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Ministry thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) has signed a framework Cooperation Agreement with Messe Frankfurt Trade Fairs Private Ltd. on 29.11.1999. The Cooperation Agreement envisages cooperation between the two parties in organisation and promotion of exhibitions, trade fairs and shows in India. The Cooperation Agreement shall remain in force for four years. Pursuant to the Cooperation Agreement, specific Working Agreements were signed for Heimtextil Tex-styles India and Ambiente India Fairs on 29.11.1999 and 6.1.2000 respectively. ITPO has reported that even though the Working Agreement for Ambiente India was signed on 6.1.2000, the dates for holding the Ambiente India Fair were finalised on 15.10.1999.

(c) and (d) A number of letters have been received including from Members of Parliament expressing apprehensions that this arrangement would have an adverse effect on the Indian Handicrafts Industry. However, by joining hands with one of the world's best organizers of trade fairs, ITPO intends to provide a higher profile for exhibiting India's products in order to attract buyers from all over the world. After a number of discussions, it has been decided that from the next year efforts will be made for convergence of the fairs organised by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts and ITPO-MFI. If this arrangement does not materialise, separate events will be organised with a minimum gap of one month.